

Middle Patuxent Environmental Area

2019

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

No experience necessary, one-time volunteers are welcome. Tools, training, and supplies will be provided. Held on the 4th Tuesday of each month, 9-11:30am.

Scrub-Shrub Restoration Project

March 26 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

Our Chesapeake Conservation Corps member Thomas Urban is creating a half-acre of scrub-shrub habitat. Volunteers are needed to remove invasive plants. There are a few, larger autumn olives remaining and garlic mustard patches that will be dealt with on this day in addition to other steps necessary to get the site ready for planting.

Garlic Mustard Pulling & Spring Flower Watching

April 23 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

A significant amount of time will be spent pulling up invasive garlic mustard but we will also search for and identify many species of spring ephemeral flowers. With luck, our trip will coincide with the annual showing of gorgeous Virginia bluebell blooms nearby the river. The walking route is determined by where we find the mustard. Plan on spending the first half of the morning removing invasive mustard and the latter half finding wildflowers.

Native Shrub Planting

May 28 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

Volunteers have worked diligently to clear out invasive Autumn olive, Japanese barberry, and other invasive plants from a half-acre spot within the Woodcock Habitat Management Area. Now there is enough cleared area to plant a mixture of native plants with the goal to create a scrub-shrub ecosystem. During this event, we will install and shelter a small variety of native shrubs in the center of the site plus small trees around the edge adjacent to the forest. We'll also take time to recount and admire the prior efforts by our intern and volunteers to prepare for this occasion.

Barberry Busting

June 25 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

Japanese barberry is a formidable foe of the environmental area. Controlling this nuisance plant requires continued efforts every year. Luckily our steadfast helpers are adept at removing it. On this day, we'll dig, yank and wrench these spiny shrubs from the ground. Long pants and shirt sleeves are a must!

Autumn Olive & Barberry Clearing

September 24 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

Autumn olive shrubs are an unwelcome but plentiful remnant of the game farm that once existed in this area. The olive is also a relentless invader requiring the implementation of a variety of control methods over several years. On this morning, volunteers will cut down the olives to provide room for park staff to return and perform subsequent herbicide treatments. The location is a new spot where we have not worked before. Any Japanese barberry shrubs found will also be dug-up and left to dry out.

Tree Shelter Cleaning & Planting Session

October 22 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

Non-native, invasive plants are a persistent threat to our habitat restoration efforts, particularly within our shrub planting sites. Several vines and vine-like plants are the worst offenders, strangling and suffocating our young woody plants. Come out and assist us with maintaining affected shelters. If time and weather allow, we'll install even more native trees or shrubs.

Autumn Olive Elimination

November 26 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

We have been fighting invasive Autumn olive since the park opened. Volunteers have helped us achieve great success with the plant's removal in several areas of at least an acre each. For this gathering, we will continue our work battling this woody pest within a relatively new work zone. Our efforts will remain focused on expanding the early successional habitat restoration area started in September.

Information

Jeff Claffy, Assistant Natural Resources Manager, MPEA, 410-313-6209 or jclaffy@howardcountymd.gov.

Allen Dupre, Natural Resources Technician, MPEA, 410-313-0505 or adupre@howardcountymd.gov.

Participants should bring water to drink, wear long pants, sturdy shoes and dress appropriately for the weather. Gloves and tools provided.



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Middle Patuxent Environmental Area

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CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

MASTER
GARDENER 

The Conservation Stewardship Project, a joint program of the Howard County Master Gardeners and Howard County Recreation & Parks, addresses the problem of controlling invasive exotic species in the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPEA). Volunteer work dates occur monthly from March through November, skipping July and August. Each event includes an educational component concerning the target invasive species or work area for the day.

The MPEA, established in 1996, is 1,021 acres in size and contains a diversity of habitat types. There are upland and bottomland hardwood forest, fields, wetlands, ponds and riparian habitats. The primary components of the MPEA's mission are natural resources management, education, research and recreation.

Driving Directions:

South Wind Circle Entrance to MPEA

Route 29 to Route 108 west towards Clarksville, or Route 32 to Route 108 east. Turn onto Trotter Road to South Wind Circle (about 1 mile). Enter the circle and proceed to trailhead on left (opposite Misty Top Pass).

Due to limited parking, we strongly encourage carpooling.

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